

The Personal Property Tax Repeal Package, Specifically HB 6025

I understand what you are trying to do in repealing Personal Property tax. It does need to be fixed.

What I do not like is the way you are setting up the Authority in this package under HB 6025. You will be setting up another bureaucracy full of more unelected bureaucrats. I have a real problem with unelected bureaucrats who are able to spend my money for something I may never use. Besides the fact that anytime an authority is set up there are winners and losers and it's the hardworking people without lobbying firms behind them who usually are the losers. You penalize those of us out here trying to do the right things by our families and our communities. You penalize our companies to help out companies who are deemed to be more necessary or more needy or worse yet someone who is a friend or family member or even someone who will personally benefit one or multiple persons on this authority.

The reasons for setting up one of these authorities are so vague and broad as to mean anything to anyone basically. Let's look at one such example. Let's say you deem us to need a giant litter box in downtown Grand Rapids. You find that the whole county of Kent should pay for this as of course we would all benefit from it with less kitty feces lying around when we lowly outliers come in for a nice dinner out. In Section 3 (1) (a) it has to be essential to public health, safety, and welfare in metropolitan areas. Some would argue that this fits. It should reduce the barriers to economic growth, facilitate economic development, preserve communities and strengthen neighborhoods, prevent or reduces unemployment, and create new employment opportunities. I think someone could make all these arguments as well. The more of us outliers who go into Grand Rapids the more jobs there would be in food service, shopping, hotels along with all those other items mentioned. These are all very unquantifiable guidelines.

This bill claims that under our constitution you, the legislature may establish in metropolitan areas additional forms of government or authorities with power, duties, and jurisdictions. I contend that these governments and authorities could have more power than our elected local governments we have now. Plus being that they are unelected we the people would have no recourse over whatever they choose to do with our money or how high they can raise our taxes for any such governmental regime.

This bill states that these authorities can perform multipurpose functions but there is nothing limiting what functions those might mean or how many any one taxpayer or household could have over them.

It has to serve a necessary function.

The purpose of this act is to do all of the following:

- a) Provide broad and flexible authorization for the establishment of new forms of government of metropolitan areas throughout this state. (notice there are no restrictions here)
- b) Facilitate the provision of vital local governmental services in metropolitan areas throughout this state, including but not limited to, police and fire protection services. (Again, no limits here)
- c) Encourage the introduction of new forms of metropolitan government. Just how many forms of unelected governments are we to have ruling us? Since this authority is to encourage new forms it will be unlimited. It might just start feeling like we live around the king in the castle of Lanse, with a local ~~futile~~ ^{Sevda} lord over us however the King decided we can have multiple futile Lords over us. There may be seven Lords who may not even agree on the size or shape of the litter box or where it is to be located so we end up paying for seven at once and several next to each other because I also notice there do not seem to be any boundaries either. In fact the state could also force us to pay for multiple kitty litter boxes. Maybe we would have to start supplying a litter box for each kitty in The Rapids of Grand because it's not right for any kitty to have to share a box even if ours merely relieve themselves in our yards.
- d) Improve the opportunities for more effective and efficient provision of governmental services. I see nothing in this scenario that makes me think in any way that this will give us more effective or efficient services. I see the possibility of so much overlap by this system I cannot even begin to fathom it. Especially when I read e

- e) Establish an authority to perform multipurpose functions. We might have one that has a dog walk but they decide then that they can bring in more taxes from us by adding a kitty litter box too.

I could go on with this silliness in an attempt to explain absurdity by being absurd but you get my drift I'm sure by now.

The bill also states These things are a "public body corporate and a special authority", whatever that means. These authorities are not an agency or instrumentality of state government. So how does that work? They have many powers of the state government or local government but they aren't one. They even have our public property to do with as they please even though we tax payers paid for it. It talks about these authorities having income. Where does that income come from? They will pay no taxes on any of this however they aren't part of the state government. They will pay no property tax. If we want to question the validity of a Community Kitty Litter Box we have to take the authority to court. So we have to fight a fake government to keep our rights that were usurped and they get to fight us with our own tax dollars. Oh, did I mention that even though this is not part of the state government, our Governor has seen fit to be the one person who can appoint the newly formed Metropolitan Area Council. I wonder if I and 4 of my closest friends could be an authority. Sounds like a great gig. I couldn't live with myself being one of these people. It feels much like the sheriff of Nottingham to me.

This council is all powerful. They make all decisions in contracts. They follow up on them. They periodically, again a vague term, have to give an accounting of who they know that might just put them in conflict of interest with their authority. All I see is that they have to disclose any connections they may have but not that they have to leave the authority but just withdrawal from any discussion or evaluation of a decision that might create a conflict of interest. It appears to me the council itself will be the ones to make up these rules. The Governor is the only one who can remove a member of the council for dirty deeds.

Section 11 is really a hard section to swallow.

Sec. 11. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this act, an authority may do all things necessary or convenient to implement the purposes, objectives, and provisions of this act and the purposes, objectives, and jurisdictions vested in the authority by this act or other law, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

Sue or be sued, I'm sure if they lose in either case we pay, enter into contracts, solicit, receive, and accept gifts from anyone, apply for and receive loans, grants other financial assistance from anyone, Take on debt in our name, invest, hire people.

Section 16 (2) says there are no boundaries. They can set up statewide.

Sec. 17. This act shall be construed liberally to effectuate the legislative intent and the purposes of this act as complete and independent authorization for the performance of each and every act and thing authorized in the act, and all powers granted in this act shall be broadly interpreted to effectuate the intent and purposes of this act and not as to limitation of powers. Powers granted to an authority shall include those fairly implied and not prohibited by law.

We out here in the working community are getting very tired of all these interlocal agreements and authorities being put up over us when we have no say in the matter. We have no say whatsoever in how much of our money they extort, how much public land they steal, who gets their gifts and who they tax double.

I want to remind you that you our legislators are our elected and accountable representation. You are the ones we put in Lansing to decide what to do about stuff and we have a way to reach you just like I'm doing here today. There is no guarantee I'll be able to do that with any of these authorities. It's hard enough to track what you are constantly doing to us over here and many of you know I spend most days trying to do so. These authorities could be varied and many. They could all be taxing us. How in the world can any person know what all their authorities are doing to them?

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